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in the dak bungalow—soup, hamburgers, cocoa, canned fruit, and *chapattis*. Discussion turned to the court session.

"Are these families on this land legally?" I asked.

"No. They are all illegal squatters. The law of Punjab provides that a man may homestead public land and that he has a period of time to make payment for it. But he must pay."

"How much must he pay?"

"About two hundred rupees [forty dollars] an acre."

"Have any paid?"

"None."

"Do they all owe arrears in taxes?"

"Yes, all of them."

"What is the law of Punjab in such cases?"

"The squatters must be ejected."

"Is that what you are going to do tomorrow? Eject them?"

There was a long pause.

"None will be ejected," he finally replied with emphasis. "You are a judge and you know that law is law but that the law is not always justice."

I nodded but answered, "Yet this is public property."

"True," he replied, "but these farmers are India's outposts. They occupy land bordering countries that may be unfriendly. It is important that India keep this border country populated. Certainly Soviet Communism exploits every discontent in India. It is better that India sacrifice her legal rights or even lose a part of her public domain and have happy people here than that she enforce her legal rights and end up with discontented citizens on this sensitive northern border."

"Why can't the people pay taxes?"

His eyes were now wide with seriousness. "Why, these people only subsist. They raise barely enough to live. They trade barley for wool from Tibet and make their own clothes. I suppose none of the families we saw this afternoon has a cash income each year of even ten rupees."

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the children during his long absences and to maintain a standard of connubial fidelity. So the wife is given protection and companionship of extra husbands. Teddy Roosevelt, Jr., who passed through Ladakh about thirty years ago on a hunting expedition, reported in his book, *East of the Sun and West of the Moon*, that polyandry served greatly to ameliorate the lot of the woman in this region. I found no evidence of that. The woman in Ladakh is the work horse of the family. When she marries she takes up the great burden of children, the house, and the fields. Unmarried women are spry, pretty, and gay. Married women are old by thirty. A few years of married life makes them bent and silent and wan. Polyandry, if designed to cater to the woman, has failed in its purpose.

In some regions polyandry may have been designed to cut down the number of babies. The scarcity of food is thought by some to have been the reason for the introduction long ago of the polyandric marriage into a few remote sections of the Kulu Valley. A related reason is sometimes advanced for the introduction of polyandry into Tibet and Ladakh. The view is that it was imported by the lamas as an instrument of control. This region does not produce much food. If the population curve were to go up, there would not be enough food to go around. Population is held in check by reducing the number of wives. That means more food for everyone as fewer babies are born. That means that the monasteries, bulging with food, need not fear a growing discontent among the masses who starve so that the lamas may eat. The purpose, if such it was, is lost in history. But the effect of polyandry is plain. The population of Ladakh has long remained practically stationary; and the food supply of the lamas has in no way been threatened.

Another theory behind polyandry also traces to a purpose that serves the interest of the monasteries. The idea is that if a woman has several husbands there will likely be discontent and rivalry among the men. The wife will have favorites; and there will be